

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1688
INFO USICA WASHDC

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PLEASE PASS TO AMBASSADOR VAKY, ARA AND PAT KENNEDY, F M

EO 11652:N/A
TAGS: AFSP, MEX
SUBJECT: COMMERCIAL MAILING OF SPEECHES BY AMBASSADOR
LUCEY

REF: (1) MEXICO 12329

1. AT THE SUGGESTION OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY VAKY, I
PHONED FORMER EMBASSY PAO LEN BALDYGA THIS AFTERNOON TO
TRY TO LEARN THE NAME OF THE LOCAL EMPLOYEE LEN HAD PRE-
VIOUSLY CITED AS HAVING MADE THE DECISION TO USE COMMER-
CIAL CABLES FOR THE DISPATCH OF THE AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH
SUMMARIES. IT BECAME EVIDENT AS WE TALKED THAT IT WOULD
NOT BE PROPER TO PLACE THE BLAME FOR WHAT OCCURRED ON ANY
LOCAL EMPLOYEE.

2. THE CONFUSION AND MISUNDERSTANDING SURROUNDING THIS
ENTIRE MATTER IS NOT EASILY CLARIFIED. FOR THE RECORD, IT
WOULD APPEAR THAT THE FOLLOWING CHRONOLOGY IS THE BEST
APPROXIMATION WE CAN OFFER AS TO WHAT OCCURRED.

3. DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD BETWEEN EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO
THE AMBASSADOR, ROBERT DUNN, AND ICA OFFICERS ABOUT THE
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DISSEMINATION OF MAJOR POLICY ADDRESSES ON U.S.-MEXICAN
RELATIONS. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE TEXTS WOULD BE OF VALUE
TO EDITORIALISTS AND THAT SHORTER TEXT SUMMARIES MIGHT BE
OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PRESS. IT WAS AGREED THAT BOTH
WOULD BE SENT OUT TO NATIONAL, BORDER STATE AND REGIONAL
PRESS IN THE UNITED STATES FOR MAJOR SPEECHES.

4. WHEN THE FIRST SPEECH SUMMARY WAS TO BE DISPATCHED, THE PRESS ATTACHE, CLAUDE VILLAREAL, WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE DRAFT, APPARENTLY BELIEVED THAT COMMERCIAL TELEGRAMS WERE AUTHORIZED. PAO LEN BALDYGA BELIEVED THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE TO TELEX A SINGLE COPY OF THE SUMMARY TO THE UNITED STATES AT EMBASSY EXPENSE AND THAT FOR AN ECONOMICAL SUM, THE TELEX MESSAGE WOULD BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE APPENDED LIST OF MEDIA OUTLETS. HE ASSUMED THAT THIS WAS THE FORM OF TRANSMISSION THAT WOULD BE USED. AT THE TIME THE SECOND SUMMARIES WERE SENT OUT, A DIFFERENT ICA EMPLOYEE HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO ASSIST THE AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE IN THE PREPARATION OF THE TEXT AND SUMMARY. WHEN HE MADE INQUIRIES ABOUT THE DISPATCH OF THE SUMMARIES, THE SAME MISUNDERSTANDING PERTAINED AND THE COMMERCIAL TELEGRAMS WERE AGAIN UTILIZED. A THIRD SPEECH BROUGHT YET ANOTHER OFFICER INTO THE SITUATION. HE SECURED APPROVE TO "CABLE" THE SUMMARIES FROM ICA AND SOUGHT CLEARANCE ON THE USE OF "CABLE" FROM DUNN. IN THIS INSTANCE, BALDYGA APPARENTLY CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT A SINGLE TELEX WAS BEING USED, VILLAREAL THAT THERE WAS A CONTINUING AUTHORIZATION OF COMMERCIAL TELEGRAMS, AND DUNN THAT A "CABLE" WAS RELATED TO THE KIND OF TRANSMISSION THAT IS COMMONLY USED BY THE EMBASSY.

5. WHEN THE EMBASSY RECEIVED THE BILLS FOR TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS CHARGES, THE ICA ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALAN CHUBB MADE IT CLEAR THAT ICA COULD NOT PROPERLY PAY FOR TRANSMISSION OF THE SUMMARIES. THE EMBASSY'S ACTING ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, TOM FITZPATRICK, THEN PHONED DUNN TO ASK WHETHER THE CHARGES FOR COMMERCIAL TELEGRAMS HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED AND WAS TOLD THEY WERE NOT. THE EMBASSY THEN PAID THE BILLS BECAUSE THE SERVICE HAD ALREADY BEEN RENDERED AND THERE WAS NO OTHER CHOICE. THE POLICY WAS MADE CLEAR TO ALL CONCERNED. TO EVERYONE'S DISMAY, AN EXCESSIVE AND UNNECESSARY SUM OF MONEY WAS PAID OUT AS A RESULT OF A SERIES OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

6. WE HAVE NO REASON TO BE PROUD OF WHAT OCCURRED. WE DO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE MISTAKES THAT WERE MADE WERE UNINTENDED. WE HAVE ALSO LEARNED A PAINFUL LESSON WHICH WE DO NOT EXPECT TO HAVE TO BE TAUGHT A SECOND TIME. LUCEY

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Draft Date: 29 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
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TAGS: AFSP, PDIP, MX, (LUCEY)
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